

12 October 2022  
716 Linden Street  
Ravenna, OH 44266

The Honorable Judge John R. Adams  
U.S. Courthouse Room 510  
Two South Main Street  
Akron, OH 44308

Your Honor,

This letter is written in reference to the case of Andrew J Drabic. Andrew is my son, born January 30, 1989. His father and I love him unconditionally and have been trying to support him as much as possible through this difficult time.

I am aware of the charges to which Andy has plead guilty, although I have only seen a few of the statements of fact included with the indictment. I am quite puzzled by these incidents as he was raised at home, at his Church and at the private schools he attended to be a respectful and kind person. He and I have discussed this situation and he expresses sorrow and repentance for his actions. He has told me that he intends to do whatever he can, while in prison, to better himself. When he is released, I can offer him a place to live and I am currently storing most of his belongings at my home and am handling his legal and financial responsibilities as much as I am able. His father is older and in poor health, but is also storing some of Andy's belongings and is supporting him financially, psychologically and emotionally, visiting him in prison with me and talking with him as much as he is able. When Andy is released, I can provide him with whatever else he needs until he can get a job and re-build his life sufficiently.

Andy is a loving, thoughtful and loyal son and friend. He always remembers special days for his father and me. He visited us regularly and helped us whenever he could. He is close with his uncles and aunts and always attended family get-togethers and holidays, often asking to bring friends along who had nowhere else to go for the day.

He became friends with a woman who originally, and briefly, was a romantic interest. He discovered that she had recently been drugged and sexually assaulted and realized that she was not ready for a close relationship of that kind and they became fast friends. He supported her through her counselling and recovery, also going with her to court proceedings that involved the attacker. He was always there for her aid, whatever she needed. She recently got married and Andy was to have been the photographer for her and her husband's wedding present, as he is a professional photographer. This wonderful woman has "adopted" me as her "3<sup>rd</sup> mom" due to her close friendship with Andy and

subsequently with me. He is presently grieving over this relationship, which has ended, at least for now, due to the shock of discovering what Andy has plead guilty to.

Andy has had several close relationships and has been a good loyal friend. His friends who I know are all bewildered and surprised at Andy's troubles as they never had any inkling of that type of behavior. He always seemed to give acquaintances the benefit of the doubt, even to his own detriment. He tried to be helpful and kind and was inclined to trust people when they had not yet earned that trust. Because of that trusting characteristic and the nature of on-line "communities", he was often hurt and felt it deeply.

Andy always seemed to be the "odd man out" in school and social settings. He was the one the bullies always picked on and we never quite understood why that was, but it affected him greatly to the point that he began withdrawing in social situations.

When Andy was a child, his father and I were very concerned with his emotional and psychological well-being. We took him to psychiatrists, psychologists and counselors from the time he was nine years old. Not one took the time to properly diagnose him. They medicated him and talked at him, but never got to know him, so therefore years of "treatment" did no good. Andy attempted suicide at least three times around the time of his infractions and was generally mentally and emotionally unwell, but I didn't know how serious it was until the suicide attempts. He was hospitalized twice, but to no avail. He started seeing a psychiatrist and was working to put his life back together; then he was arrested. He had apologized to some people before the arrest.

When he was first in prison, he was delusional and severely paranoid. I was worried about his well-being and about the decisions he might make and conferred with a psychiatrist friend. He suggested a medication for Andy, since he couldn't get treatment yet, and I passed on that suggestion. Andy has been taking lamotrigine for several months and has been thinking more rationally and clearly. Andy has never shown a propensity for children and I believe that he ignored the clear warning signs that the young lady was underage and believed her when she told him that she was an adult. He was so desperate for a relationship that he was terribly careless. His communications were exceedingly crude and vulgar. I must admit that I am horrified by his actions and had no idea that this was going on. I haven't read details more than what was online on Channel 3's website and I have no idea where his nastiness came from.

Andy has great talent as a photographer starting before age seven, the age at which he joined 4-H and represented his County at the Ohio State Fair with his photography project. He continued taking sports and news photos in high school and college and winning awards. He also took pictures for the Akron Aeros baseball team, some of which were used on championship posters, pennants and game schedules in the following year. He worked for several colleges around the country and for a charitable Christian soccer organization in the United States and on mission trips in Peru and Mexico.

Andy was a National Merit Scholarship runner-up in high school and was accepted at Grove City College in Pennsylvania. He was unfortunately unable to complete college because of his crippling depression.

He had a good full-time job at Meijer's stores and got a promotion even before the new store he was hired for was opened. He had recently been promoted again, beginning to move up in his job path. He was working as a professional photographer regularly, both taking sports photos at Louisville High School for another photographer who had hired him and independently. He and another photographer

had started brainstorming about opening their own studio in the future. He also was working part-time as a mystery shopper evaluating customer service at parking lots in Ohio, Kentucky and California.

Andy is well aware that he allowed his life to go off the rails and that his actions have hurt people and run afoul of the law. He is ashamed at what he has done and regrets that his actions negatively impacted others. He has told me that he wishes he could apologize to those people he hurt.

While in prison Andy would like to get psychiatric/psychological treatment, such as cognitive and/or dialectical counselling. He is planning to take college courses and to learn new job skills as well as hopefully improving his diet to help his mental health. He is already contemplating what he might do as employment, where he might live and how he will rebuild his life when he is released from prison. He is hopeful that with counselling, Christian guidance, education and experience, his life may be fulfilling when he is a free man.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

  
Barbara D Zaebst